



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Frequently Asked Questions about Race to the Top District Performance Measure Data Collection Template

Updated on January 19, 2012

- 1) Some performance measures ask districts to provide the number or percentage of educators participating in certain RTTT projects. Who should be counted as an “educator?”**

Teachers, aides, paraprofessionals, administrators, and educational support staff should be counted as educators.

- 2) Performance measures 1A.3 and 1A.4 require districts to provide the number of educators and evaluators that have been trained on the new evaluation system. How can my district determine whether staff members have been “trained” and should be counted?**

Each district is responsible for designing and implementing its own training to ensure that teachers and evaluators are familiar with and understand the new evaluation system. If a teacher or evaluator has completed the district’s training program to the district’s satisfaction, they may be counted as trained for the purposes of performance measures 1A.3 and 1A.4.

- 3) Performance measures 4D.4 and 4D.5 require districts to report on high needs students participating in AP classes. What is the definition of a “high needs” student?**

If a student has limited English proficiency (LEP), is eligible for free or reduced price lunch, or receives special education services they are classified as “high needs.”

- 4) My district did not select project 4B (Your Plan for College), but our template includes performance measure 4.1a, which asks about the percentage of students with a plan on YPFC. How should 4.1a be populated in our template?**

ESE is interested in the level of participation in Your Plan for College overall. If your

district did not formally select project 4B in its response to the RTTT Years 2-4 RFP, but is using YPFC, populate the fields for 4.1a. If your district did not select project 4B and is not using YPFC, simply enter “N/A” in the baseline field.

- 5) My district is not implementing all of the elements of the Teaching and Learning System (model curriculum units, curriculum embedded performance tasks, interim/formative assessment system, and vocational-technical competency tracking system), but we will be implementing at least one. How should the baseline, benchmark, and target date fields for the components that we have not selected be populated?**

Complete the baseline, benchmark, and target date fields for the component(s) that your district has selected as instructed. Populate the fields for the components that your district did not select as “N/A.”

- 6) Since the new educator survey will not be ready until spring of 2012, target dates for projects 2.6a and 2.7a may be affected. Will this be a problem?**

No, ESE understands that any target dates for Project 2B.1 will probably be pushed back since the survey will not be released until late winter or spring 2012.

- 7) My district has only one staff member responsible for SIMS/SCS and/or EPIMS reporting. How should I complete 3.3 and 3.4?**

Baseline information should be based on the share of the staff member’s time that was spent on SY2009-2010 end of year reporting. If the SIMS/SCS and EPIMS staff members each spent 100% of their time on reporting, baselines for both 3.3 and 3.4 should be 1 FTE. If there is only one staff person for SIMS/SCS and EPIMS and they split their time equally between both collections, FTE baselines for 3.3. and 3.4 should be .5 each. Future progress reports should be based on the percentage of time the staff person spends on SIMS/SCS and/or EPIMS reporting after the SIF agents are installed. Ideally, the percentage of time they spend will be reduced from the baseline, but ESE understands that the reduction in effort may not happen immediately due to issues related to SIF implementation.

- 8) My district implemented and completed some RTTT performance measures in Year 1. How should we populate the baseline and target date fields for those measures?**

If performance measure benchmarks were met during Year 1, the baseline should reflect this information. In some cases, this means that your baseline should be “yes” if the benchmark was achieved before the start of RTTT. The target date selected should reflect the quarter during Year 1 that the benchmark was achieved.

9) Should the benchmarks and target dates populated by districts reflect goals and expectations for Year 2 only, or for the duration of RTTT?

Benchmarks and target dates should reflect what you expect to accomplish and when over the course of 4 years of RTTT. Keep in mind that projects that began in Year 1 may have target dates that are sooner than others beginning in Years 2-4. It is likely that many will have benchmarks and target dates that will occur in Year 4.

10) I don't agree with one or more of the target date ranges that ESE has pre-populated in my template. May I change it in the version that I upload to the Dropbox?

Yes, pre-populated target dates are simply recommendations. If you do not agree with the pre-populated target date for any project, please adjust it as necessary in the version uploaded to the RTTT Dropbox on the Security Portal.

11) I don't agree with one or more of the baselines or benchmarks that ESE has pre-populated. May I change it in the version that I upload to the Dropbox?

Some baseline and benchmark fields are locked and cannot be edited, while others can be changed. If you do not agree with a pre-populated baseline or benchmark and you are able to change it, do so. Please be sure to note what you changed and why in the Explanation column. If one or both fields are locked, please contact Sonja Yuhas Cove at 617-338-6843 or syuhascove@doe.mass.edu to discuss making necessary changes to your template.

12) Some of my district's projects are only partially funded through RTTT. Do I still need to report on these projects?

Yes, districts are required to report on any projects that were included in their response to the RTTT Years 2-4 RFP, regardless of how they are funded.

13) How often will districts be asked to report data on RTTT projects?

After initial baseline, benchmark, and target date information is collected, districts will be asked to report on RTTT progress twice annually, in December and June. The next reporting cycle will occur in June 2012. Note that not all projects included in the current district template will require ongoing data collection from districts; in many cases, progress reports will be collected from vendors or provided by ESE.

14) I'd like to see the full listing of RTTT projects. Where can I find it?

A full listing of RTTT projects and performance measures is located in the RTTT Goals Workbook, which is posted here: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/rttt/goalsworkbook.xls>.